

HERBAL MEDICINE PERCEPTION AND PRACTICE AMONG CHILDBEARING MOTHER WITH MEDICAL EDUCATION BACKGROUND IN BANDUNG: A PRELIMINARY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Herbal medicine has been widely used among Indonesians as an alternative medicine to chemical based drugs. However, there is still a doubt about its effectiveness and efficiency. Many studies report that natural side of herbal medicine has healthier effect than additive or chemistry ingredient of chemical based drugs. Nowadays, there is a shifting in nurturing children among childbearing mother, including mother with medical education background, living in more nature. The aim of this study is to explore their perception and practice towards herbal medicine. Open-ended questionnaires were online distributed among 30 childbearing mothers with medical education background and analyzed using descriptive method. The result shows that 73% of respondents use herbal medicine such as honey (33.3%), onion (13.3%), lime (13.3%), etc. The less side-effect is a strongest point of their usages (45%), followed by mild illness treatment (36%), and natural ingredient (18%). Those respondents admitted the symptoms were reduced after using herbal medicine, but 81.6% of them would use chemical drugs when the symptoms persisted. Twenty seven percent of the respondents never used herbal medicine because of complicated preparation and unclear effect. However, the entire respondents said chemical drugs have a clear effect, and its effectiveness and efficiency even better than herbal medicine. Hence, it can be concluded that most respondents even though have medical knowledge would use herbal medicine on first medication for their children rather than chemical based drugs.

Keywords: herbal, childbearing mother, medical knowledge, bandung

ABSTRAK

Pengobatan tradisional sudah digunakan secara luas di masyarakat Indonesia sebagai pengobatan alternatif pengganti atau pendamping obat-obatan kimia. Namun, efektivitas dan efisiensinya masih diragukan. Banyak penelitian melaporkan bahwa sifat alami obat tradisional lebih sehat dibandingkan senyawa kimia. Di sisi lain, saat ini terjadi pergeseran perilaku pengasuhan anak, termasuk pada ibu dengan latar belakang pendidikan kesehatan. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui penggunaan dan persepsi ibu berlatar pendidikan kesehatan mengenai pengobatan tradisional. Kuesioner terbuka didistribusikan secara online kepada 30 orang ibu berlatar pendidikan kesehatan yang mempunyai anak balita. Hasilnya dianalisis secara deskripsi. Sebanyak 73% responden menggunakan obat tradisional seperti madu (33,3%), bawang merah (13,3%), jeruk nipis (13,3%), dsb. Alasan utama penggunaan obat tradisional adalah efek sampingnya yang rendah. Namun jika gejala penyakit tidak berkurang dengan pengobatan tradisional, 81,6% responden akan beralih ke obat-obatan kimia. Sementara itu, 27% responden belum pernah memberikan obat tradisional pada anak mereka dikarenakan rumitnya persiapan dan efek yang belum jelas. Seluruh responden menyatakan obat-obatan kimia mempunyai efek yang jelas dibandingkan obat tradisional, hal ini menyebabkan efektifitas dan efisiensinya lebih baik. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa sebagian besar responden pada penelitian ini memberikan obat tradisional kepada anaknya sebagai pertolongan pertama, walaupun efektifitas dan efisiensinya masih belum jelas.

Kata kunci: obat tradisional, ibu, pendidikan kesehatan, bandung

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INTRODUCTION

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) defines as other methods of healing philosophies, therapies, approaches rather than conventional medicine or chemical based medicine (Meyer et al, 2013). It has been used widely to treat diseases that hard to treat by conventional medicine. In this past several years, its practice increases almost in every part of this world. For example, from 2002 to 2007 in US, CAM usage increased from 35.1% to 38.3% (Descourouez et al, 2013). Herbal medicine, acupuncture, and reflexiology are the most popular treatment among all (Sven et al, 2008; Sven et al, 2007). In 2006, Roth reported that 85% of world population using herbal medicine in their life (Roth, 2006). However, CAM has broad effects and may vary among users (Bishop and Holmes, 2013). This is the reason why it is so hard to design a good clinical trial and to define patient's perspective.

Conventional medicine is a product of Arabic medicine developed during European Renaissance and now called as western medicine (Pan et al, 2012). Conventional medicine is practiced by holders of medical degrees (medical doctors or psychiatrists) or doctorates of osteopathy, as well as by allied health professionals, such as physical therapists, psychologists, and registered nurses. Some other terms for CM are including allopathy and allopathic medicine, Western medicine, mainstream medicine, orthodox medicine, regular medicine, and biomedicine (Graham, 2000). CM usually uses invasive methods and chemical based drugs. This style is taught in most of medical school in the world, including Indonesia. Hence, Indonesian health professional have more knowledge and skill in western style medicine or conventional medicine rather than complementary and alternative medicine. Almost of conventional medicine practice is based on evidence-based medicine, where animal studies and human studies are important before applying to the patient (Meyer et al, 2013).

Attachment parenting or responsive parenting is one of the famous nurturing styles nowadays. It is not only about building a strong bond between child and caregiver, but also live healthy life. Hence, many attachment parents choose to use alternative or natural healthcare such as herbal remedies, chiropractic care, natural childbirth, organic or homemade food, and routine exercise (Nakajima et al, 2010). Fewer side effects and less chemical ingredients are some reasons for choosing natural healthcare rather than conventional medicine and instant food. This new parenting style becomes more popular with

particular followers are young families with toddler, including mother with medical education background.

Those facts reflect an intriguing aspect for childbearing mother with medical education background. Medical student while studying at undergraduate level were taught conventional medicine with all its beneficial and detrimental effects. Meanwhile some schools teach herbal medicine as optional course, but syllabus is mainly designed for conventional medicine. Mother with medical education background certainly has passion to give only the best or less harmful effects for their family, especially their children. Therefore, herbal medicine practice and perception of childbearing mother with medical education background were observed.

METHODOLOGY

We collected preliminary data by using open-ended questions about herbal medicine practice and perception. Questioners were online distributed to 30 young mothers with medical education background such as medical doctor, dentist, pharmacist, nurse, and midwives. From their respond, we manage data into graphs and explanation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents of this study

Respondents of this preliminary study are childbearing mother with medical education background situated in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia; consist of medical doctor (30%), dentist (20%), pharmacist (20%), nurse (13%), and midwives (17%) (Figure. 1).

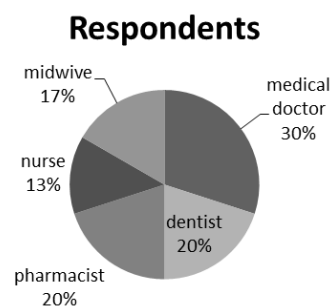


Figure 1. Respondents Study Background

Herbal medicine practice among respondents

Most of respondents (73%) gave herbal medicine to their children, while the rest never gave it (Figure 2). Most of them used herbal medicine that were commonly use in community, such as honey (33.3%), onion (13.3%), lime (13.3%), in order to treat cough, fever, or to

increase immune system (Figure 3). The ingredients and dose were given to the children by following tradition and cultural practices.

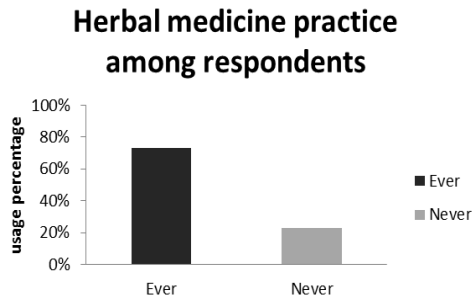


Figure 2. Herbal medicine practice among respondents

Types of herbal medicine

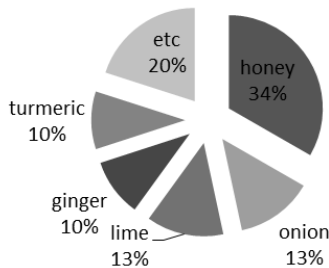


Figure 3. Types of herbal medicine used by respondents for their children

The strongest reason to use herbal medicine is its less side-effect (45%), followed by mild illness treatment (36%), and herbal medicine contains natural ingredient (18%) (Figure 4). Those respondents who gave herbal medicine to their children admit the symptoms were reduced after usage, but 81.6% of them would use chemical drugs if the symptoms persisted.

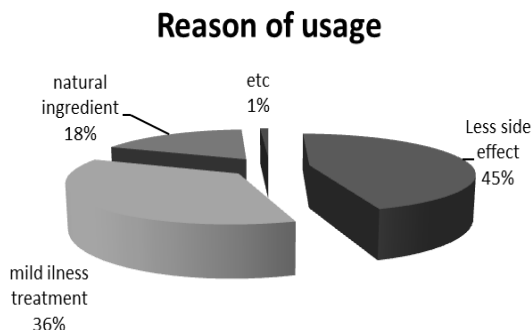


Figure 4. Reason of respondents to use herbal medicine for their children

Twenty seven percent of the respondents never used herbal medicine because of complicated preparation, unclear effect and dose (Figure 5). However, the entire respondents said that chemical drugs have a clear effect, and its effectiveness and efficiency is better than herbal medicine.

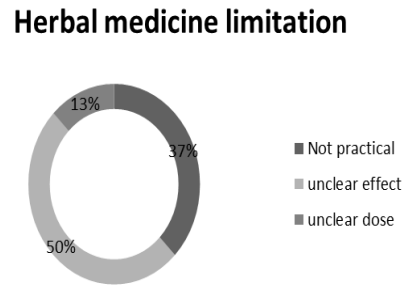


Figure 5. Reason not to use herbal medicine for their children

Medical education background might correlates to the respondents' perception and practice about herbal medicine. In one hand, they know that chemical based drugs have a clear mechanisms and dose, but they also have adverse effects that might harmful for their children. As a mother they would like to avoid those side effects. Therefore, despite their knowledge about unclerness mechanisms and dose of herbal medicine, they still used it as an initial medicine.

CONCLUSION

From this preliminary study, it can be concluded that even though the respondents have a conventional medical education background, most of them would use herbal medicine on first medication for their children. However, when the symptom or illness persists, conventional medicine is still the main choice. Perception of childbearing mother with medical education background about herbal is based on assumption that it has less side effect even though unclear mechanisms and dose. This perception is raised from tradition and cultural practices growth in their family and community.

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